

Citizen's Transportation Oversight Committee

Burton Barr Public Library

Meeting Minutes

September 17, 2002

A Citizen's Transportation Oversight Committee (CTOC) meeting was held at the Burton Barr Central Library, 1221 North Central Avenue, 4th Floor, Phoenix, Arizona on September 17, 2002 with Chairperson Roc Arnett presiding.

Members Present:

Roc Arnett, Chairperson
Jim Lykins, Maricopa County District 2
Tom Liddy, Maricopa County District 1
Ron Gawlitta, Maricopa County District 3
Paul Schwartz, Maricopa County District 4

Members Absent:

Dwight Amery, Member-at-Large

Others Present:

Debra Brisk, Deputy Director, ADOT
Dianne Barker, citizen
Dave Anderson, HDR Eng. Inc.
Trent Kelso, ADOT
Amy Edwards, HDR Eng. Inc.
Mary Viparina, ADOT
Kwi Kang, ADOT
Steve Jimenez, ADOT
Carolyn Deobler, ADOT

Bob McKnight, citizen
William "Blue" Crowley, citizen
Jim Romero, ADOT
Edward Johnson, citizen
Les Bell, ADOT
Al Kattan, ADOT
Elizabeth Neville, ADOT
Chuck Eaton, ADOT

1. Call To Order:

Chairperson Arnett called the Citizen's Transportation Oversight Committee meeting to order at 5:00 p.m.

2. Approval of Minutes, 7/16/02:

Chairman Arnett called for a motion. Jim Lykins moved to approve the minutes of the CTOC meeting and Ron Gawlitta seconded the motion.

3. Staff Report:

Chuck Eaton reported the following information:

- We have currently completed and opened 91 miles of freeway on the system, 13.5 miles are under construction, 32 miles are under design and 1,300 of approximately 8,600 acres of right-of-way remain to be acquired.

- Grand Avenue: 91st Avenue – A mid-October completion is anticipated. 27th Avenue – Under construction and targeted for completion in 2003.
- SR 51: Bell to Loop 101 – Under construction and progressing well. Expected to open in Spring 2003.
- Red Mountain: Gilbert to Higley – Nearing completion. We expect to open to Greenfield Road in October. The final mile will not be completed until the end of the year.
- Santan: 56th Street to Price Freeway and East ½ of I-10/Santan Interchange underway. All three projects are expected to be completed and open by the end of 2003. Kraemer is building the interchanges at I-10 and Price. Pulice has the sections in-between.
- Santan Dobson Road to SR 87 – Design is nearing completion and the project will be advertised soon.
- Three segments of the Santan are expected to open in 2005. The remaining three projects are scheduled to open in 2006, with the design on two of those projects just beginning.
- Red Mountain: US 60 to Power – Completion expected in 2007. There are a number of drainage issues that have to be addressed; therefore it will take all of the planned design time.

The following questions and comments were made:

- Ron Gawlitta asked if it is known to what extent traffic on I-10 will be alleviated by the segment between Price and McClintock. Mr. Eaton said, while no analysis has been done, it would provide another alternative for reaching the east valley. He stated that it would attract even more traffic once the Santan is built further to the east.
- Chairperson Arnett asked if it would be a full half-diamond interchange. Mr. Eaton explained it will have fully directional ramps.
- Mr. Gawlitta asked about the status the Loop 303. Mr. Eaton said the County is doing the study, however, ADOT watching it closely. He stated that a consultant has been hired to do the design concept and environmental studies from Lake Pleasant Road to I-17. The two county projects go from Grand Avenue to Lake Pleasant Road and should be completed in 2004, resulting in a four-lane roadway.
- Chairperson Arnett noted an extension of the half-cent sales tax and funding for the Loop 303 are being considered.

4. South Mountain DCR/EIS Status:

Mary Viparina, ADOT, introduced Amy Edwards of HDR Engineering, Inc., who made a power point presentation concerning the South Mountain Corridor. Ms. Edwards explained the project began in July 2001 and an agency scoping occurred in October 2001, wherein 75 attendees from various agencies defined needs and what needed to be addressed. She stated public involvement has occurred throughout the project, including a newsletter, website, phone line, and public meetings. She said a Citizen's Advisory Team was also established in January

2002, with 30 individuals representing various stakeholders within the valley and corridor. She stated they are currently working on the Purpose and Need, addressing such questions as "Why here?" and "Why now?". She explained the valley's population is expected to exceed 4.8 million by 2025, noting MAG perceives their previous 2040 population prediction will be realized as early as 2030. She said all planned development is occurring in the outlying areas, with the west side of the valley and north Pinal County seeing substantial growth.

Ms. Edwards reviewed the Regional Freeway System established in the mid-80's to help address anticipated growth. She said their study looked at total demand and projected out all roadway capacity, planned roadway improvements and improvements to transit and light rail. She stated they found all of the improvements would only accommodate 65 percent of the future demand. She said an additional three percent of excess demand

could be saved if transit was allowed to grow to their ideal level and another five percent could be saved by increased TDM. She stated they would be able to take another five percent of vehicles off the road if all surface arterial streets in the corridor were improved to six lanes. She said, assuming all of those improvements were made, 22 percent of the total excess demand would still not be accommodated. She stated, therefore, they looked at putting a facility in the South Mountain area.

Ms. Edwards explained they ran the MAG model, which had a South Mountain facility, and found 155,000 vehicles per day on South Mountain, with most coming from the southeast valley. She said the South Mountain facility would only address seven percent of the excess demand; therefore, other solutions will be necessary. She stated they looked at the Regional Freeway System, specifically in the southwest valley, and found it takes approximately 30 minutes to travel from Pecos Road/I-10 to I-10/Washington and 31 minutes to travel from Levine to Washington/I-10 during the a.m. peak hours. She said their projections indicate 37 minutes and 64 minutes travel time for the same routes, respectively, in 2025 without South Mountain. She said putting South Mountain into place would reduce congestion, thereby lessening the travel time to 28 minutes and 48 minutes, respectively.

Ms. Edwards stated they are currently in the process of determining alternatives to study in further detail and will follow that with the design of the alternatives for evaluation in the draft EIS process. She stated they will then propose a preferred alternative and complete the draft EIS and Design Concept Report.

The following questions and comments were made:

- Ms. Edwards confirmed for Chairperson Arnett that the model included the I-10 Collector Distributor System and improvements on I-10.
- Chairperson Arnett asked about funding. Ms. Viparina said they are doing the EIS study in an attempt to make the Corridor eligible for federal funds.
- Mr. Gawlitta asked what consideration has been given to elevated transit alternatives, the widening of freeways and HOV lanes. Ms. Edwards said they have looked at future HOV plans and increasing transit. Mr. Gawlitta expressed his opinion an elevated transit alternative should be given serious consideration. Mr. Anderson, HDR Engineering, Inc., stated the study did not consider elevated transit, but that it could be something they consider in the future.
- Mr. Liddy asked if any thought has been given to doing a similar study in the west or northwest valley. Chairperson Arnett responded yes, noting MAG studies are already underway.
- Mr. Gawlitta asked to what extent are the Indian Tribes involved in the discussions. Ms. Edwards stated representatives from the Gila River Indian Community have participated in the discussions.
- In response to Mr. Schwartz's question, Mr. Eaton stated they have some budget for right-of-way in the South Mountain Corridor; however, it is being used for protection against development. Ms. Edwards pointed out they have asked the Gila River Indian Community to provide an alternative that is acceptable to them, however, they are maintaining the right-of-way on Pecos Road in case an alternative cannot be found.
- Mr. Schwartz asked if they have looked at connecting the South Mountain Corridor to the Loop 101. Ms. Edwards responded yes, noting an initial corridor screen has started in the west valley. She said, after reviewing environmental and design criteria, they have determined they will need to tie in either at the Loop 101 or somewhere between 43rd and 83rd Avenues.

5. RFS Status Slide Presentation:

Al Kattan, ADOT, made a slide presentation, updating the Committee on construction activities on the Regional Freeway System

The following questions and comments were made:

- Ron Gawlitta asked if there are plans to install off ramps on the Loop 101 at 35th and 43rd Avenue. Mr. Kattan explained off ramps are not an option, however, they have asked for a scoping study to see what affect an auxiliary lane between 35th and 51st Avenue would have on traffic. Mr. Gawlitta expressed concern about access to the hospital and other commercial developments in the area.

6. US 60 Grand Intersection Projects Overview and Status:

Trent Kelso, ADOT, identified the following objectives of the Grand Avenue Corridor project: 1) eliminate the six-legged intersections; 2) eliminate the railroad crossings; 3) improve regional mobility; 4) accommodate projected travel demand; 5) serve the statewide function of US 60; 6) promote multi-modal uses; 7) improve aesthetics; and 8) promote development opportunities. He discussed the grade separations included in the project, stating Grand Avenue will be elevated over 27th Avenue/Thomas and 43rd Avenue/Camelback. He said 51st and 67th Avenues will go over Bethany Home Road/Grand and Northern/Grand, respectively. He said Maryland will be elevated over 55th Avenue/Grand and Olive Avenue will go over 75th Avenue/Grand, while Grand will go under 59th Avenue/Glendale. He said 91st Avenue Ramps to the Loop 101 are also part of the project. He stated the 27th Avenue and 91st Avenue sites started construction approximately one year ago and are expected to open in the summer of 2003 and Fall 2002, respectively. He stated the 43rd Avenue/Camelback and 51st Avenue/Bethany Home sites will begin construction in Winter 2002 with an anticipated duration of eighteen months. He said the 55th Avenue/Maryland, 67th Avenue/Northern and 75th Avenue/Olive intersections are scheduled to begin construction in the summer of 2003 and open to traffic in the winter of 2004-05. He stated the 59th Avenue/Glendale site will begin construction in the winter of 2004/05 and open to traffic in the Fall 2006. He reviewed aerial depictions of each intersection and discussed the details of the planned improvements.

7. Call to the Public:

Bob McKnight, citizen, stated preliminary drawings of the light rail system are available at 411 North Central. He explained the drawings are the first he has seen that show specific details and figures. He questioned the feasibility of the Civic Center underpass, stating unsecured wheel chairs would not be able to handle the 6 percent upgrade and 5.5 percent downgrade. He asked if they still plan on providing a mini-yard near America West Arena to reduce event traffic congestion. He asked the Committee to review the drawings.

D. D. Baker, citizen, asked if the Committee voted Deloitte and Touche as the auditor of the Maricopa freeway system. She stressed the importance of obtaining an independent audit, suggesting the audit also include the seven percent going to transit. With regard to transit, she suggested they look more on the diagonals, such as Grand Avenue.

William "Blue" Crowley, citizen, expressed his opinion Chairperson Arnett has been breaking the law by going to dinner at the MAG meetings, stating it constitutes compensation. He said he brought the issue up to the Committee and staff on numerous occasions.

He said he views the situation as a "republican good ole boy's club." He asked how their plans for Grand Avenue can be considered multi-modal, sensitive to pedestrians and transit. He said the cost of acquiring the right-of-way necessary for bicycle should not be a consideration because people's lives are more important. He stated ISTEPA requires that they consider people first, pointing out the planned flyovers lack accessibility to transit stops. He accused Chairperson Arnett of being parochial at the expense of the west valley. He urged the

Committee members to be ethical and moral, especially on the little issues. He also asked the Committee members to support dividing the half-cent sales tax between light rail and freeways on one part and pedestrian, bicycle and transit, with a study on heavy rail, on the other side.

8. Next Regular Meeting:

Citizen's Transportation Oversight Committee - ADOT
5:00 p.m. November 19, 2002
Burton Barr Central Library
1221 North Central Avenue, 4th Floor
Phoenix, Arizona

Chairperson Arnett stated the Committee will hear a presentation from the southwest and northwest MAG report and comments on the elevated issue.

9. CTOC Member Reports:

No reports were made.

10. Closing Comments and Adjournment:

No comments were made.

Meeting adjourned at 7:00 p.m.